Dear Jim, Lane/Ray/ Kershaw developments 5/4/77

It was a very long day for one who walked much more than the Key/ Bridge-National Press Bldg of which you know. Next to the last development was close to midnight. It was almost like esp.

For about a week I've felt like I had a pulled muscle in the back mostly on the right but occasionally accross the bottom of the rib cage. When I removed my walking tougher supports and put on the sleeping surgical supports last night this pain got bad enough to remind me of the pleurisy od two years ago in NYW. Sol was lying there, moving gingerly to find a less uncomfortable position, not sleeping, when Ted Gandolfo phoned. Just at the moment that NYC experience had me thinking of him and the tapes that have not arrived.

He was shocked, he said and sounded. Lane on Jerry Williams/WMCA again. Ted phoned in to ask hhm why he was so vicious in his reference to me on page whateverit was and Lane interrupted him to keep him from getting the whole question out and then Jerry Williams cut him off when Lane had been even more vicious, so even Ted was not able to say or do anything. The way it came out Bud and I only were mentioned by named. Lane called us a disaster to Ray and his defense. More than this. All the rest that I now recall is that the difference is that Ray is now speaking out- that we had kept him from speaking out before.

Aside from the viciousness of this and the fact that all the speaking is not helping Ray and is hurting him and the fact that all this is irrelevant under habeas corpus there is also the fact as it rel tes to us. I want you to have a record at one point of what I recall on just this, some my doing, some yours, some both of us together.

After the way MCRae was going was apparent I decided to do another King book. I discussed this with Jimmy two times in person. I do not recall what there is in writing. The first time was the morning after my debate with Belin at Vandebilt. That would make it about 11/20/75. The next time, the last time I saw Jimmy, was about 1/16/76. This was the day after I spoke at Goldsboro, N.C. I'd flown to Memphis from them to discuss this more with Jimmy and to explore civil suits with him further. I'd also arranged for James Payne to make his Memphis trip to coincide and for him to return to NYC vis Nashville, where we met and flew to New York together.This was, of course, before there was any committee or any Lane book or any such project.

Jimmy refused to have any part of speaking out. The one restriction I placed on what he'd say is that you approve. I told him if I wanted to I could just go over his evid. hrg testimony and quote that. He said he had no objection to my doing another book but he was sure he had no relief in court, was sure there was nothing he could say that would make any difference, etc.

Prior to this I do not know of a single appearance Jimmy made or interview except a bad one Jerry arranged in the National Enquirer that I was not responsible for or was not favorable to him. You should remember that I persuaded him to do some after he refused you. Examples are the Paul Valentine interview in the Post on his in-jail conditions and the Tom Snyder show. You were so angry after your phone conversation with him on Valentine you were ready to quit. And not long after the Valentine story he was released from solitary. There was also the matter of his appearance on all nets after the Valentine story and Snyder. I arranged that in terms of talking to Bud about it and then getting Jimmy to agree with it. You should recall that you and Bud were there and that rather than appearaing as a promotion for a bad book by Lane Jimmy had prime time on allnets. Not just crap on Good Morning America. There is more but I think this makes the point that we did not keep Jimmy under any kind of wraps when he want ed to say what would not hurt him. Aside from this there is the present Lane/Kershaw hurt to truth.

At the evidentiary hearing we all wanted Jimmy to testify. It is I who having learned from the press what the reaction would be to his not testifying that he had not killed King worked out the formula what made it possible without opening the whole thing to a trial that we could not prepare for. Jimmy did testify that he did not kill King under this

Also from Gandolfo, Jerry's appearance with Lifton was on the Phil Donahue show. Ted says he is getting a tape from a station where he knows someone. He will give me a dub.

After I phoned you about Kershaw telling the press he knew the name of the gas station attendant who saw Ray there was more, both UPI. Jes told me about the first in reading the wire copy to me. It was from Petros, which Mark can't even pronounce after being there.

After midnight, before I fell asleep - perhaps it helped me because I did sleep afterward - I heard Kershaw telling the supposed story and giving the name, Willie Green. Well, I was right. That is exactly the story I picked up in the Memphis newspaper morgues and showed Jimmy about 3/1/71. He then told me this was not the man. This is what I told you last night.

There then was more. UPI found Green and he denied it, too.

I don't think you need any more than the past two days for a refusal to be part of anything now going on and being confident it is inRay's interest to refuse.

After yesterday's Lane promotion I warned you again that besides promotiong himself Lane was doing nothing except harm to Jimmy with all these extreme, false and irrelevant statements and that his using Jimmy in it even prompted Lardner to ask how the Tennessee authorities could permit it.

More than when I told you yesterday it now will never be possible to use Jimmy as a witness. Jimmy was not at the scene of the crime when the shot was fired. He was at a gas station. He was not at the one where Willie Green worked. But between Lane and Kershaw, Lane using Jimmy on this on film, no lawyer in his right mind would use Jimmy on that solid alibi if he can now ever get into court. The rest relating to this that I have I have buried so the real guy can't be hurt. My feeling when Paul Valentine pushed me to try to get his name- so Paul also knows the Willie Green story from way back - was that if anything happens to the man that will be less hurtful than having him reached or pressured. With what I now have it is hardly as necessary if necessary at all.

There is probably more I've forgotten. I'm still a bit tired. Much less uncomfortable.

Ted wanted me to phone the station right away. I think I'll write instead. I did not call last night and I was not about to come into the middle of a program I'd not heard with Jerry having the hand on the switch.

Lane is out of control. It is important to obtain all possible from his interviews and appearances and gradually build it up. Right now I believe Prentice-Hall is legally responsible.

Best,